



Levels of Care Guidelines for Private Duty Agencies

National Private Duty Association
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These are the guidelines for each level of care developed by the NPDA Standards and Ethics Committee. Agencies should follow these guidelines unless: the agency's state has regulations for care that are more stringent; agency is limited by the agency's insurance coverage; or agency's general business practices prohibit the activity. All services must be provided according to the Practice Act of the State and/or standards of care set by the agency's state.

Level 1 Activities

Recommended activities for Level 1 Caregivers. Level 1 care should be provided by a Companion Caregiver or Homemaker. This level does not require "hands on" services.

- Provide socialization, conversation and emotional reassurance to the client.
- Encourage and participate in reading, appropriate games, and other activities to promote well-being and stimulate the mind and the spirit.
- Encourage, monitor and assist with meal preparation and fluids.
- Encourage mild exercise program.
- Provide timely medication reminders and observe client for compliance in taking medication. Medications must be pre-dosed by the client, client's family, client's legal representative or licensed professional. Any irregularities noted in the pre-dosed medications, such as medications taken too often or not often enough, or not at the correct time as marked in the medication reminder container should be reported immediately by the caregiver to the supervisor.
- Supervise the safety of client while he/she is toileting, bathing and dressing.
- Assist with home management as authorized by the client, client's family, client's legal representative, or licensed professional; i.e., assist client in paying bills, monitoring food expirations, ordering/shopping for groceries/home supplies, and monitor home repair as needed.
- Perform light housekeeping duties.
- Take care of pets and water the plants.
- Provide incidental transportation to scheduled appointments, shopping and errands.
- Assist with mail and supervise deliveries to the client.
- Report any concerns to supervisor.
- All the procedures done within the Level 1 will be in accordance with the agency's state guidelines, if applicable.



Level 1 Training Guidelines

Recommendations for Training of Level 1 Employees Based on Assigned Duties.

- Review of agency's employee policy and procedure manuals.
- Universal Precautions—focus on hand washing and personal hygiene.
- Housekeeping—what chores are allowed and information on use and storage of cleaning materials and supplies.
- Food safety/handling—techniques for the safe storage, handling and preparation of food.
- Maintaining a clean, healthy, and safe environment.
- Safety concerns—home, personal, fire, and weather related safety. Agency's procedure for emergency situations.
- Basic body mechanics for employee safety.
- Confidentiality and security of client's personal, financial and health information.
- Importance of nutrition/hydration for client.
- Basic human needs, aging and disease processes.
- Communication skills with clients/families in areas such as with persons who are hard of hearing, have dementia, or other special needs.
- Knowledge and understanding of abuse and neglect prevention including the reporting requirements.
- Observation, reporting, and completion of documentation of services provided. Emphasis on objective vs. subjective reporting.

Level 1 Supervision

Level 1 Supervision can be performed by a supervisor with experience or training in the senior or disabled care industry. This level of supervision does not require a nursing background.

- Initial completion, review, and on-going revision (as needed) of a service plan.
- Supervisory phone call or on-site visit at least once every 90 days.
- Completion of documentation of supervisory visit/phone call for file.
- Review of documentation of tasks performed by caregiver.

Level 2 Activities

Recommended activities for Level 2 Caregivers. Level 2 care should be provided by a Personal Care Assistant/Attendant Caregiver with demonstrated competencies in all assigned duties or a Certified Nurse Aide, Home Health Aide or the state level equivalent. This level allows “hands on” care of the client.

- All Level 1 activities can also be performed in Level 2.
- Assist with activities of daily living—grooming, bathing, dressing, and toileting.
- Assist with shaving using an electric or safety razor only.
- Assist with nail care. Assistance may include soaking of nails, pushing back of cuticles without utensils and filing of nails. Caregivers may not trim or clip nails. Nail care should not be provided to clients with a medical condition that might involve peripheral circulatory problems or loss of sensation.
- Assist with feeding client providing the client can still independently swallow and be positioned upright.
- Assist with general skin care when skin is unbroken and when any chronic skin problems are not active. Skin care should be preventive rather than therapeutic in nature. Caregivers may apply non-medicated lotions and solutions that do not require a physician's prescription.
- Remind and encourage physical therapy or daily exercise. Passive Range of motion (PROM) may not be performed at this level.
- Assist with turning and positioning client when the client is able to identify to the care staff, verbally, non-verbally or through other means, when the position needs to be changed and only when skilled skin care is not required in conjunction with the change in position.
- Assist with pivot transfers (i.e. bed to chair, chair to bed, chair to commode, and wheelchair to car) only when the client has sufficient balance and strength to reliably stand, pivot and assist with the transfer. Adaptive and safety equipment may be used in transfers, provided the client is fully trained in the use of the equipment and can direct the transfer. Caregivers can assist with the use of gait belts and transfer devices with the proper training and demonstrated competency.
- Assist with ambulation when the client is able to assist with the process. Caregivers may assist client with the use of adaptive equipment for ambulation, such as walkers, canes or wheelchairs once the client has been trained on the use of the equipment and released from the care of the prescribing health care professional.
- Empty or change external urinary and ostomy bags.
- Assist with client directed non-invasive ostomy care only when there is no need for skilled skin care or for observation or reporting to a nurse.
- Assist client with blood sugar checks; that is opening containers and handling equipment. Caregiver cannot perform procedure.

Level 2 Activities Cont.

- Assist with application of support stockings that can be purchased without a physician's prescription. At this level, caregivers may not assist with an application of an Ace bandage, anti-embolic or other pressure stockings that must be purchased with a physician prescription.
- All the procedures done within the Level 2 will be in accordance with the agency's state guidelines, if applicable.

Level 2 Training Guidelines

Recommendations for Training of Level 2 Employees Based on Assigned Duties.

- All training listed in Level 1.
- Body mechanics for employee safety to include transferring and positioning techniques.
- Use of durable medical equipment (wheelchairs, walkers, canes, beds).
- Demonstrated competency on use of lift chairs and other assistive transfer devices.
- How to feed a client if client is unable to feed him/herself.
- How to assist with personal care including bathing, pericare, basic continence care, hair care, oral care, shaving, and dressing.
- Skin care.
- Nail and foot care—no trimming or clipping of nails.
- Oxygen use and care of equipment, including safety factors. Training will include what is acceptable by the state.
- Non-invasive Foley catheter care.
- Non-invasive Ostomy bag care.
- Basic hygiene and infection control procedures.
- End-of-Life Support.
- Specialized dementia training.
- Procedure for application of support stockings.
- Procedure for emptying catheter and ostomy bag including cleansing around intact suprapubic tube site.

Level 2 Supervision

Level 2 Supervision can be performed by a supervisor with experience or training in the senior or disabled care industry. This level of supervision does not require a nursing background.

- Initial completion, review, and on-going revision (if needed) of service plan.
- On-site supervisory visit should take place at least once every 90 days.
- Completion of documentation of supervisory visit/phone call for file.
- Review of documentation of tasks performed by caregiver.



Level 2 Supervision Cont.

Note: An on-site supervisory visit should be performed every 30-45 days for any client diagnosed with dementia, cognitive impairment or any diagnosis of clients at the end of life. This is especially true for clients with a severe deficit in mental capacity that affects areas such as thought processes, problem solving, judgment, memory or comprehension and that interferes with such things as reality orientation, failure to care for self, ability to recognize danger to self or others, or impulse control.

Level 3 Activities

Recommended activities for Level 3 Caregivers. Level 3 care should be provided by a Home Health Aide or a Certified Nurse Aide.

- All Level 1 and 2 activities can be performed in Level 3.
- Perform daily living activities—grooming, bathing, dressing, and toileting.
- Provide nail trimming to clients that are not diabetic or on anti-coagulant prescriptions.
- Provide skin care to clients with chronic problems under the direction of a licensed nurse.
- Provide medication assistance under the direction of a licensed registered nurse.
- Reinforce range of motion, physical and occupational therapy exercises under the direction of a licensed therapist or nurse.
- Obtain and record vital signs; i.e., blood pressure, pulse, respirations, and daily weights when indicated. Caregiver should report significant changes to the supervising nurse.
- All the procedures done within the Level 3 will be in accordance with the agency's state guidelines, if applicable.

Level 3 Training Guidelines

Recommendations for Training of Level 3 Employees Based on Assigned Duties.

- All training will include the Level 1 and 2 training.
- Provide routine in-services to instruct caregivers on the higher level requirements of care.
- Range of motion exercises.
- Proper techniques of taking all vital signs.

Level 3 Supervision

Level 3 Supervision should be performed by a licensed nurse.

- Complete nursing assessment and completion of a care plan by a licensed nurse.
- Supervisory visit every 2 weeks to 30 days depending on stability of client, required tasks, medication assistance, and state requirements.
- Completion of documentation of supervisory visit for chart.
- Observation of caregivers and additional training as necessary.